



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

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NOAA Fisheries Requests Shrimp Trawlers in GA Waters (zone 31) to Continue Using Modified TEDs to Protect Migrating Endangered Leatherback Sea Turtles *Emergency Rule Set to Expire after May 3*

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) requests that shrimpers trawling in waters off Georgia continue using turtle excluder devices (TEDs) that are modified to have an opening large enough for leatherbacks to escape until it can be determined whether the emergency restrictions implemented on April 19 need to be extended.

“We have been unable to conduct aerial flights to evaluate leatherback concentrations because of adverse weather conditions and mechanical difficulties,” said Georgia Cranmore, chief of NOAA Fisheries southeast regional protected resources division. “It’s unfortunate that the aerial surveys can’t be completed until next week, after the expiration of the current emergency restriction. So we’re urging shrimpers to comply with this request because it will save them the trouble of having to reinstall the larger TEDs if leatherbacks are still present in large numbers.”

The emergency restrictions requiring modified TEDs in zone 31 off Georgia expires at 11:59 p.m. May 3. If aerial surveys document high concentrations of leatherback sea turtles, the emergency restrictions will be extended in zone 31 for an additional 14 days.

NOAA Fisheries is an agency of the Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The agency conducts scientific research and provides services and products to support fisheries management, fisheries development, trade and industry assistance, enforcement, and protected species and habitat conservation programs.

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